



U.S. EPA
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OREGON OPERATIONS OFFICE

SEP 06 2016

I am not sure of all the effects that the EPA's current plan to clean up the Willamette River will have on local businesses, but I know that many people are concerned. The ten-mile length of the river that was designated a Superfund Site almost 16 years ago still needs to be cleaned up. The EPA has just come out with a plan to do that, but there are serious problems with it. EPA-REGION 10

This plan focuses on dredging the riverbed along these ten miles and then removing the hazardous materials that are dug up to a landfill elsewhere. The Willamette is a wide river and the project may not totally close it, but it will definitely have impacts on area businesses and on the Port as well. I have owned my own custom welding business since 1997. Even though it is not located on the Willamette, I know that any drop in business, for whatever reason, is not a good thing, especially if the plan that causes that drop is not the only, or even the best, option. The EPA is basing its plan on data from as early as 2004, not on newer data from 2014 that is readily available. This new data shows that the river's own natural processes are dealing with the contamination, and have in fact reduced it by 40% over the years in-between the two studies.

I know that the earth heals itself most of the time. Every time we have a storm here in Portland, it cleans the streets, the city and the river. As long as we work harder to prevent any new pollution from entering the Willamette, we should use a more conservative approach to the river's cleanup, giving it the chance to heal itself as much as possible. I have heard that other Superfund Sites have not been required to suffer through the same type of overly aggressive and expensive cleanup that the EPA is asking Portland residents to deal with. The cleanup as proposed will cost over \$740 million and perhaps as much as \$1.4 billion. A billion dollars is a lot of money. There are so many better uses for it here in Portland.

I would hope that the EPA listens to the concerns of Portland residents and business owners. We live and work here, and our local knowledge should be used in planning a better cleanup strategy for the Willamette.

Sincerely,

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Owner

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